

## TERMS OF REFERENCE (TOR) FOR THE SELECTION OF A LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT AND FINANCING PARTNER FOR KIGALI WETLANDS PARK

June 2026

### 1. Background

Rwanda's population is 14.4 million, with an annual growth rate of 2.86%, and Kigali is projected to have the highest urban population density in the country. Rapid urbanization has increased impervious surfaces, generating higher rainwater runoff, which threatens infrastructure, increases flood risks, and endangers public safety.

In response, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) has embraced a **Green Growth and Climate-Resilient Development Strategy**, reflected in the Kigali City Master Plan 2050. These frameworks emphasize environmental protection, sustainable urban planning, and the creation of accessible green and recreational spaces for residents and visitors. The GoR targets that 25% of Kigali's urban area be converted into green and recreational spaces, with green areas in every neighborhood to support healthy lifestyles, recreation, education, and tourism.

Wetlands form a key part of this green development strategy. Covering approximately 75.21 km<sup>2</sup> in Kigali, wetlands provide essential ecosystem services, including flood mitigation, water filtration, and biodiversity protection. Recognizing their ecological, economic, and social value, the GoR has committed to restoring and protecting urban wetlands as critical natural infrastructure that safeguards the city and enhances the quality of urban life.

Under the Second Urban Development Project (RUDP II) and Kigali Flood Control & Urban Catchment Management Programme, the GoR is rehabilitating five major wetlands in Kigali:

- **Nyabugogo** (131 ha)
- **Kibumba** (68 ha)
- **Rugenge-Rwintare** (65 ha)
- **Rwampara** (65 ha)
- **Gikondo** (162 ha)

These 491 hectares of restored wetlands will provide flood attenuation, improved water quality, biodiversity enhancement, landscape regeneration, and 61.5 km of walkways and cycling paths. The five wetlands are envisioned not only as ecological infrastructure but also as a **vibrant urban wetlands park**, integrating recreation, education, eco-tourism, research, and cultural programming.

Leveraging the success of **Nyandungu Eco-Park (NEP)**, a 164.8-hectare rehabilitated wetland in Kicukiro and Gasabo Districts, demonstrates the immense potential for degraded wetlands to be transformed into functional and attractive urban parks. NEP continues to be a flagship example of biodiversity conservation, ecotourism, and recreational space, having received 111,842 visitors in 2025. Building on this success, the five restored wetlands collectively serve as living laboratories for

urban biodiversity conservation and green growth, while simultaneously creating socio-economic opportunities, promoting tourism, and fostering meaningful community engagement.

To secure these benefits over the long term, the GoR seeks a **qualified long-term management and financing partner(s) or consortium** to consolidate restoration achievements, ensure ecological resilience, develop sustainable revenue-generating infrastructure, and provide high-quality recreational, educational, and community-focused experiences.

## 2. Purpose of the ToR

The purpose of this ToR is to:

1. Establish a structured governance, management, and financing model for the five Kigali wetlands.
2. Define the scope of services, roles, and responsibilities for securing long-term management arrangements.
3. Set guiding principles to ensure ecological protection, operational efficiency, financial sustainability, and stakeholder coordination.

## 3. Objectives

The objectives of the ToR are to:

1. Ensure the professional, efficient, and ecologically sustainable management of the five rehabilitated wetlands through continuous monitoring of flora and fauna, restoration of native habitats, removal of invasive species, maintenance of wetland hydrology, and implementation of seasonal interventions to support biodiversity and ecosystem functionality. Mobilize private sector investment for designated visitor and commercial facilities through structured management arrangements.
2. Establish sustainable financing mechanisms to support operations, maintenance, and reinvestment.
3. Protect and promote biodiversity conservation, enhance visitor experiences, and generate socio-economic benefits for surrounding communities.

## 4. Scope of Services

The long-term management partner(s) shall:

1. Ensure daily management and continued operation of the wetlands, including routine maintenance, staffing, scheduling, and operational oversight.
2. Maintain and monitor ecological functions, including flora, fauna, and water quality.
3. Establish and operate visitor facilities with low-impact recreational and educational activities in accordance with the approved business plan

4. Design and implement diversified, sustainable financing mechanisms, including financial models leveraging park user revenues, concessions, donor funding, and impact investments, to ensure reliable funding for operations, maintenance, and reinvestment.
5. Engage local communities and stakeholders in park management, awareness, and educational programs, and establish a partnership framework with the small businesses, adjacent landowners, developers, relevant partners and public institutions.
6. Manage infrastructure, security, and human resources efficiently, inclusively, and professionally.
7. Implement monitoring and evaluation frameworks with key performance indicators (KPIs) across ecological, social, and economic metrics.

## 5. Institutional and Governance Framework

### 5.1 Oversight Structure

The overall management of the wetlands will be overseen by a designated governance body, the Kigali Wetlands Park Committee, responsible for providing strategic oversight and guidance.

- **RDB:** Contracting authority and overall coordinating body responsible for management oversight.
- **MoE:** policy leadership, strategic oversight to ensure environmental integrity, alignment with national and international commitments, and integration of ecosystem level priorities across all interventions.
- **REMA:** set standards and provide approvals for wetlands enhancement plans, Environmental compliance, ecosystem monitoring, and regulatory enforcement.
- **City of Kigali (CoK):** Oversee urban planning including infrastructure in areas impacting the wetlands, enforce buffer zones, manage upstream catchments, and provide decentralization/local governance oversight.
- **RWB:** Technical oversight of hydraulic infrastructure, drainage, flood control, and climate-resilient development standards.
- **MINECOFIN:** Fiscal and budget alignment oversight.
- **MINISPORTS:** Advisory guidance on recreational and community sports integration.

### 5.2 Chief Tourism Office (RDB)

A dedicated office within RDB in charge of Tourism and Conservation which will:

- Oversee contracts and performance.
- Serve as Secretariat to the Kigali Wetlands Park Committee.
- Facilitate in mobilizing donor, sponsor, and nature-positive financing.
- Review annual budget requests.
- Promote global best practices.

## 6. Contractual Model

The Government of Rwanda seeks **long-term management and financing partner(s) or consortium** to manage, finance, operate and generate revenue for the wetlands, integrating visitor facilities and commercial infrastructure with centralized wetland stewardship ensuring ecological integrity.

N <sup>o</sup>	Wetland	Description	Planned Uses / Activities
1.	Kibumba	Kibumba is envisioned as a vibrant eco-economic interface linking restored wetland systems with urban development. It integrates recreation, SME development, and eco-commerce while maintaining ecological buffers and biodiversity protection.	Mixed-use: restaurants, retail, wellness, cafes, event spaces, parking; Recreational Site: fishing activities and experience, kids partyvenues, sports fields, botanical garden, cooking school.
2.	Nyabugogo	Nyabugogo is the flagship urban wetland combining stormwater management, biodiversity conservation, and high-intensity public use. It integrates a central lake, vegetated islands, transit connectivity, and recreation into a single multifunctional landscape.	Lake site: number of f&b and activity operators, and equipment (for beach experience, and water-based equipment like kayaks, etc.), parking Food truck and kiosk developments along the road, linked to parking, and close to the transport interchange.
3.	Gikondo	Gikondo is envisioned as an urban botanical and events wetland that merges ecological restoration with public recreation, education, and large-scale cultural programming within a restored natural landscape.	Ticketing, restaurant, event space, retail, interactive environmental experience, botanical garden, sports fields, parking.
4.	Rugenge-Rwintare	Rugenge-Rwintare is a creative eco-wetland where art, recreation, and environmental education intersect, featuring restored habitats, interactive installations, and family-friendly recreational spaces.	Activities and island activation: zipline, F&B, event space, pond-side experiences, Knowledge hub, parking.
5.	Rwampara	Rwampara is a cultural forest wetland focused on ecological restoration, cultural expression, and quiet recreation through forest walks, learning spaces, and community-based activities.	Cultural center with restaurant, creative workshop, event space, parking; F&B near sports fields and Cercle Sportif de Kigali

### **Partner Responsibilities:**

- Finance, design, build, operate, and transfer designated visitor and commercial facilities in accordance with standards, guidelines, and approvals established by the relevant regulatory authority
- Subject to approval by the Park Committee, develop and operate revenue-generating infrastructure and services, including F&B outlets, event spaces, retail spaces, wellness facilities, rental services, activity nodes, and other visitor amenities.
- Develop and manage contracts and partnership agreements.

### **Phased Development and Investor Milestone**

The selected partner shall implement the development of visitor and commercial infrastructure through a phased approach aligned with environmental safeguards and park readiness. The phases shall include clearly defined investment milestones, timelines, and deliverables to be agreed upon during contract negotiations.

Each phase shall be subject to performance review and compliance with environmental and operational standards prior to progression to subsequent phases.

## **7. Financing Framework**

### **7.1 Revenue Streams**

Subject to the approval of the Park Committee, the proposed revenue sources may include, but are not limited to:

- Entry tickets on designated areas
- Concession fees and revenue sharing
- Carbon finance projects
- Facility rentals
- Paid parking
- Event permits and activity fees
- Premium zone ticketing
- Commercial rentals
- Sponsorships and donor funding
- Nature-positive markets and ecosystem service mechanisms

### **7.2 Government Support**

Government support may include:

- Capital investments
- Initial operational budget and subsidies

- Phase 2 infrastructure development
- Annual budget contribution

## **8. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**

KPIs shall cover:

- Ecological performance indicators, including quantified thresholds and targets for hydrological function, biodiversity measures, number of hectares restored, invasive species control and water quality metrics
- Financial performance indicators, including revenue generation, investment commitments, operational sustainability, and cost-efficiency targets.
- Visitor management indicators, including visitor numbers, satisfaction levels, safety, and compliance with carrying capacity limits.
- Community participation and socio-economic indicators, including local employment, SME participation, stakeholder engagement, and benefit-sharing mechanisms.
- Compliance indicators covering adherence to environmental, social, health and safety, and regulatory standards and requirements.

## **9. Reporting and Accountability**

The Wetlands Management Partner shall:

- Submit quarterly operational reports
- Provide annual audited financial statements
- Participate in annual performance reviews
- Align with Kigali City Master Plan

## **10. Expected Outcomes**

- Financially sustainable wetlands park
- Enhanced biodiversity conservation and ecological resilience
- Increased tourism and local economic participation
- Job creation and SME growth
- Improved flood mitigation and water management
- Strong institutional capacity for wetland governance
- Sale of other wetland goods and services such as carbon market and biodiversity credits

## **11. Application Documents**

Applicants (individual organizations, NGOs, companies, or consortia) are required to submit a complete set of application documents demonstrating their technical, financial, and managerial capacity to sustainably manage the five rehabilitated Kigali wetlands. The documents should be organized as follows:

### 11.1 Cover Letter / Expression of Interest

- A formal letter expressing interest in the long-term management of the wetlands addressed to the CEO of RDB.
- Confirmation that the applicant has read, understood, and agrees to comply with the ToR.
- Statement of alignment with the GoR's vision for wetland conservation, ecological restoration, community engagement, and sustainable tourism.

### 11.2 General Information

- Legal status, country of establishment
- Overview of operations, history, conservation/tourism experience
- Organizational structure and contacts

### 11.3 Governance & Management Capacity

- Proposed corporate/governance structure
- Key personnel qualifications and CVs
- Organizational chart

### 11.4 Technical Proposal

- **Operations & Maintenance:** strategy for infrastructure management, access control, security, landscaping, and waste management.
- **Ecosystem Management:** Approach to ecosystem protection, monitoring, evaluation, and reporting, including hydrological function of the wetlands, biodiversity integrity, water quality, native species restoration, invasive species control, and maintenance of ecosystem services. approach to biodiversity protection, monitoring, evaluation and reporting, native species restoration, invasive species control, and ecosystem services maintenance.
- **Visitor Services & Experience:** proposals for visitor facilities, educational programs, and recreational activities aligned with the approved wetland vision, while ensuring diversified and affordable access across different user groups. proposals for visitor facilities, educational programs, and recreational activities.
- **Community Engagement:** plan to involve surrounding communities in governance, educational programs, and economic benefits.
- **Marketing & Promotion:** strategy to attract visitors, promote conservation awareness, and integrate digital engagement.

### 11.5 Financial Proposal

- Proposed financial structure for long-term management and financing of the wetlands.
- Revenue model, including potential sources (fees, rentals, sponsorships, activity permits).
- Projected operating and maintenance budgets for the first 5 years applicable post-defects liability period.
- Evidence of financial capacity to invest in infrastructure, long-term operations, and ecological restoration.

### **11.6 Legal & Compliance**

- Certified Registration certificates
- Certified Tax compliance
- Conflict of interest declaration letter

### **11.7 Past Experience & References**

- Detailed description of prior projects in urban park management, wetlands restoration, conservation, or related fields.
- List of personnel with their CV's
- Names, contact information, and references for similar projects.
- Letters of recommendation from government agencies, NGOs, or private sector partners (if available).

### **11.8 Consortium Agreements (if applicable)**

- Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) or formal agreement among consortium members.
- Description of the roles and responsibilities of each member.
- Governance and decision-making protocols for consortium operations.

### **11.9 Submission Format**

- Documents must be submitted electronically in **PDF format**, clearly labeled and indexed according to sections above.
- Appendices can include detailed tables, charts, or project plans.
- All submissions must be signed by an authorized representative.

## **12. Experience Requirements**

Applicants must demonstrate:

1. Ability to operate in Rwanda
2. Minimum of five (5) years of relevant experience in managing and financing complex projects, destinations, tourism facilities, environmental, recreational, conservation, or

related assets. Technical, operational, and financial capacity, with proven experience in: Ecosystem restoration, conservation, and management:

- Tourism program development and delivery
  - Visitor and community education/outreach programs
  - Workforce management and human resources
  - Engagement with government, corporate, and NGO partners
  - Commercial partnerships, contracts, and marketing
  - Financial management and KPI reporting
3. Experience developing sustainable revenue models (low-impact tourism, commercial engagement, innovative financing, CSR/fundraising)

### 13. Duration

Applicants must propose the duration of the management agreement and justification. *(Subject to negotiation).*

### 14. Submission & Review Process

1. Submission of applications (per Section 11)
2. Proposal presentation (if requested)
3. Review and evaluation
4. Due diligence
5. Communication of results
6. Contract negotiation

### 15. Evaluation and Selection Criteria

#### 15.1. Technical evaluation

Only administratively compliant applications shall proceed to technical evaluation.

The Technical applications shall be evaluated based on the following criteria and maximum points allocation:

<b>Evaluation Criteria</b>	<b>Maximum Points (%)</b>
1. Institutional Experience in Wetland / Park / Protected Area Management or related fields	20
2. Technical Approach	25
3. Governance and Management Structure	10
4. Financial Sustainability Strategy (Conceptual Model - no financial figures)	15
5. Community Engagement and Stakeholder Integration	10
6. Environmental and Social Safeguards Framework	10

7. Monitoring, Reporting & KPIs Framework	10
<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>

Only applicants scoring a minimum of 70 out of 100 points in the Technical Evaluation shall qualify for the Financial Evaluation stage under the Two - Envelope System.

### 15.2. Financial Evaluation

Financial Proposals of technically qualified applicants shall be evaluated based on:

- Investment and capital mobilization capacity
- Revenue-sharing or concession structure
- Financial sustainability and projections
- Long-term value to Government

### 15.2 Final Selection

The final score shall be calculated using the following weighting:

- Technical Proposal: 60%
- Financial Proposal: 40%

The Applicant with the highest combined score shall be recommended for contract negotiations, subject to due diligence and approval by the relevant authorities.

The Government of Rwanda reserves the right to request clarifications or cancel the process where necessary.

**Applications should be submitted to:** [kigaliwetlandspark@rdb.rw](mailto:kigaliwetlandspark@rdb.rw)

**Deadline:** All applications must be submitted electronically to the above-mentioned email address no later than 4<sup>th</sup> July 2026, 17:00 (CAT).

### Site Visits:

Interested applicants may request a site visit by submitting a formal request to [ctooffice@rdb.rw](mailto:ctooffice@rdb.rw) at least five (5) days in advance of the planned visit; visits will be organized on specified dates and coordinated by RDB in collaboration with REMA.

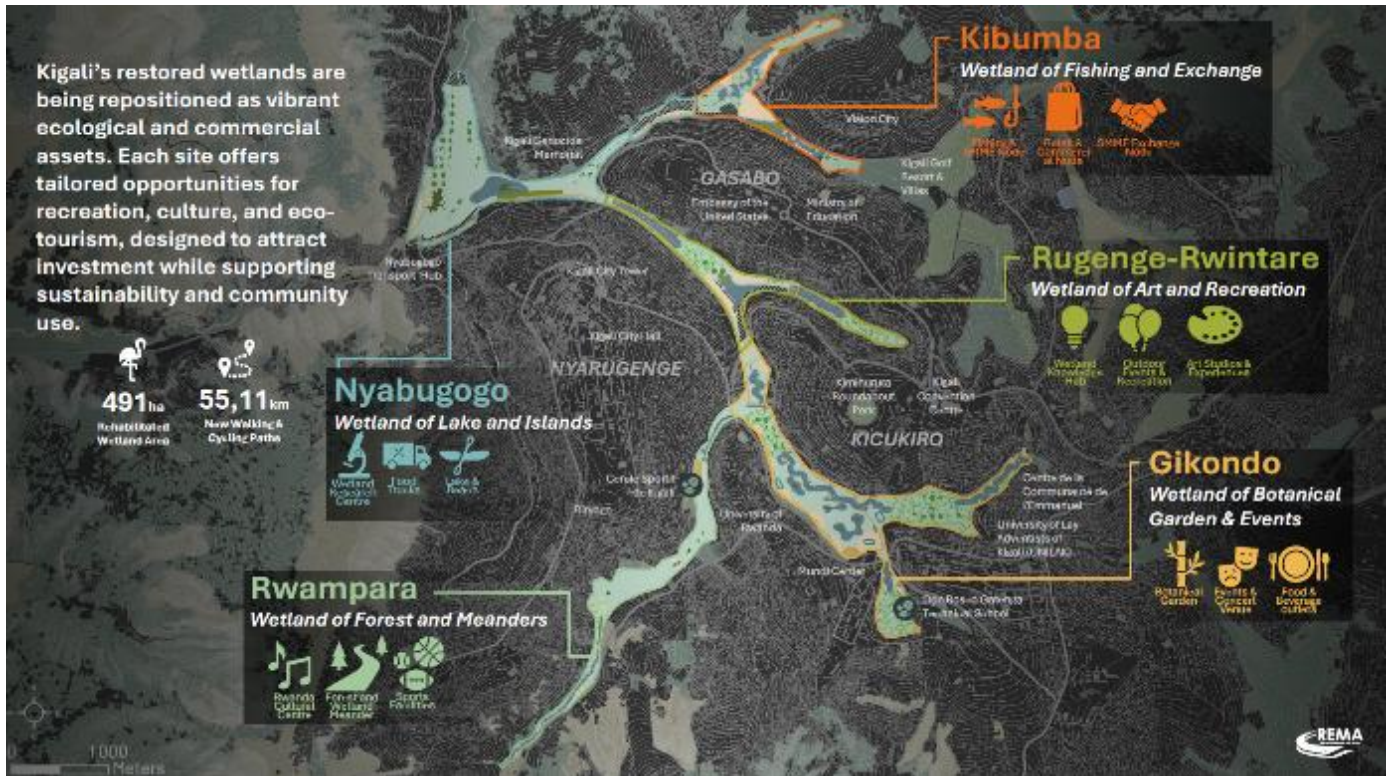
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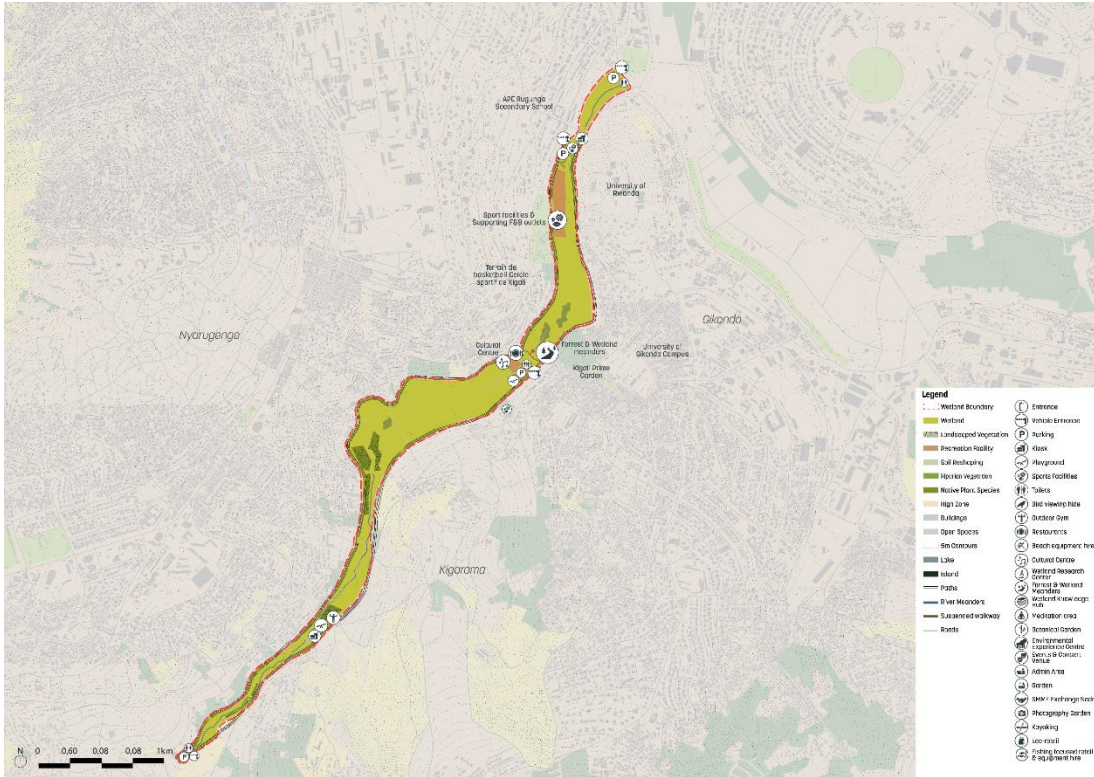



**Jean-Guy AFRIKA**  
**Chief Executive Officer**  
**Rwanda Development Board**

***[The following pages contain the annexes]***

**Annexes: Overview of the Wetlands**





1. *Rwampara Wetland*



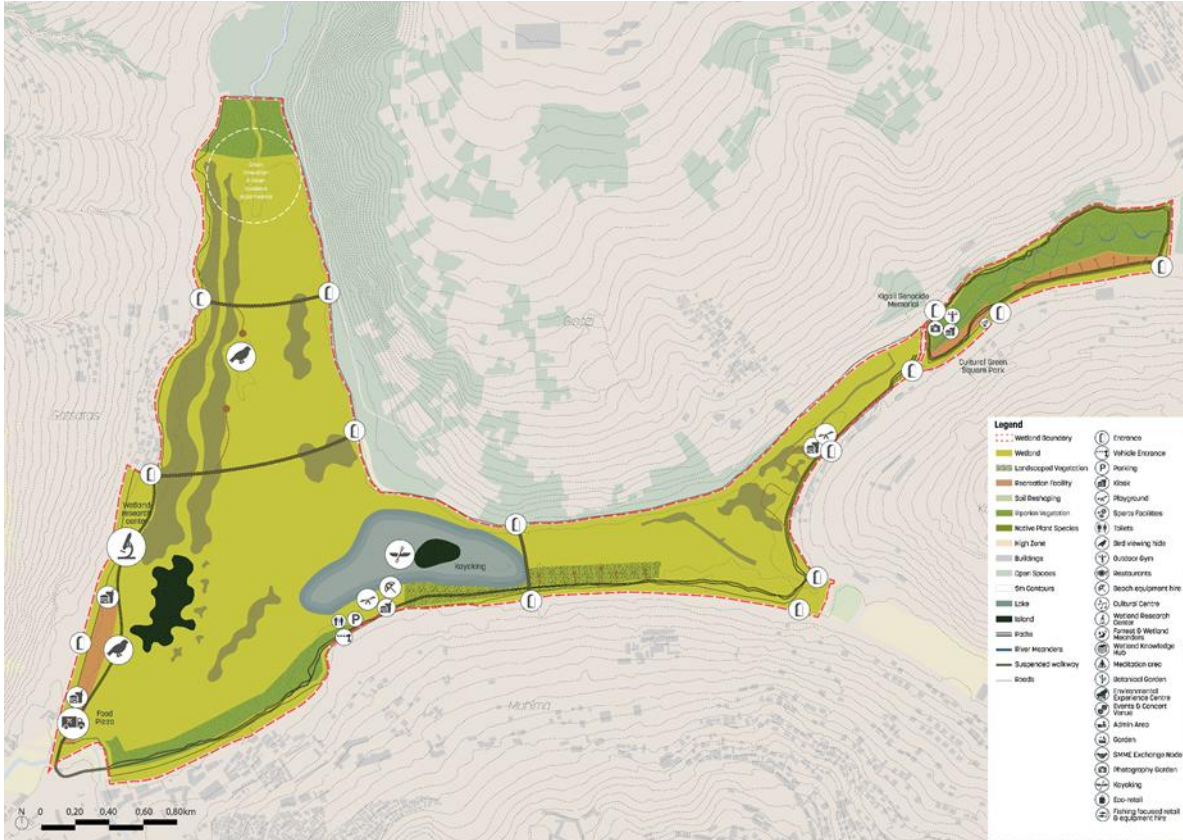
2. *Gikondo Wetland*



3. Rugenge-Rwitare Wetland



4. Kibumba Wetland



5. Nyabugogo Wetland

END.